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## News Items from the School of Education of the University of Chicago

### THE BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION OF COLLEGES

While most people recognize the fundamental importance of sound business management in our educational institutions, very little literature is to be found in this specific field, so that college authorities and others interested in promoting economy and efficiency in the use of public funds for higher education have little to guide them. A distinct contribution in this connection has recently been made by Julian A. Burruss, Ph.D., Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Virginia, in *A Study of the Business Administration of Colleges Based on an Examination of the Practices of Land Grant Colleges in the Making and Using of Budgets*. The study includes detailed considerations of the general organization and administration of finances, the original budget of requests for appropriations, the working budget, budget forms and classifications, accounting, salaries, supplies and inventories, collecting and paying, and financial reporting. Numerous printed forms are included. The necessary data were secured from the land-grant colleges of eighteen states on the coast and in the Middle West which were visited for the purpose of examining their business methods.

It is insisted that the only logical basis for the formulation of budgets and the use of funds is found in the objectives of the institutions. First, there is the necessity of setting clearly the task, determining what is to be done, the grade or standard to be reached, and the time to be consumed; second, there is the necessity of ascertaining just what materials, equipment, and organization should be provided; and third, there is the necessity of calculating the cost of providing the required facilities and of doing the work. Until the first two steps are taken the last cannot be

intelligently taken, although in practice the order is often reversed. This sometimes leads to waste and inefficiency in the use of public funds.

A comprehensive budget of both requests and expenditures, the application of approved methods of the industrial world to the business of our educational institutions, and clear and full reporting of financial facts offer the best assurance that the public will derive full value from the huge sums now being expended for public education; and this may be applied to any level, from the primary school to the university. Only as an institution bases its requests on clearly defined objectives should it expect to receive support, and only as support is supplied to meet these objectives should the public expect to get the desired results.

#### HISTORY OF THE ILLINOIS STATE NORMAL SCHOOLS

The history of the state normal schools of Illinois from 1857 to 1920 has been one of marked progress, as shown by E. W. Combs, A.M., Principal of the High School, Prairie Depot, Ohio, in a recent study of these schools. From 1857 to 1869 the Illinois State Normal University had the distinction of being the only normal school in Illinois. It was followed in 1869 by the Southern Illinois State Normal University, by the Northern and the Eastern State Normal schools in 1895, and by the Western Illinois State Normal School in 1899. The gradual extension of normal-school facilities to all parts of Illinois has been influential in raising the educational standards of its schools. The constantly increasing attendance shows clearly that the schools are fulfilling their mission of preparing the young men and women for teaching-positions in the state. At the present time the five schools are under the direct supervision of a single normal-school board consisting of nine members and two ex-officio members—the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Director of the Department of Registration and Education.